

THE PUBLIC LANDING PLACE MADE AT ELDERKINS MILL AT THE HEAD OF YANTIC COVE, NEAR THE FALLS

land on the town plot, and found it more convenient to live on these grants.

In this way the foundations were laid for the town of Norwich. The first of these was at the landing place, where Elderkin's mill was built. Elderkin was first granted a home lot on the town street, near what is now known as Peck's corner. He lived there for many years, and his house was later granted the land on Washington street, already referred to. The exact date of the building of this mill is unknown, but it was probably built between 1663 and 1665. The time of the removal of the mill to its present site is also unknown, but it was probably done by the first permanent settler in this territory, was perhaps Josiah Read, who came from Norwich about 1687. The first permanent settler in this territory was perhaps Josiah Read, who came from Norwich about 1687. The first permanent settler in this territory was perhaps Josiah Read, who came from Norwich about 1687.

Some of the earliest grants on the Sprague river, below the falls, were made to the Quinebaug, including land on both sides of the river on the east side of the river being comprised in Long's tract. Probably the first actual inhabitant of the town of Preston was Greenfield Larrabee. Next to him may be counted the sons of Norwich, the proprietors, Thomas Tracy, Jun., Jonathan Tracy, Samuel Pith and Nathaniel Lettingwell, who were cultivating farms there in 1689, or soon after. Preston as an independent town began in 1687.

About three years later a grant mill was established at the junction of Chase's brook and the Yantic river, just below the falls. The mill was built by the son of the first settler, and the town of Norwich was founded.

Although the first house in Windham is said to have been built by an Englishman named John Cates, as early as 1689, yet the men who actually founded the town were settlers of Joshua Under, a son of the first settler, being of Norwich.

Fielding (1689), Canterbury (1703), and New Canaan (1715) were also children of Old Norwich.

CHELSEA IN 1720-1784.

After being 70 years a wilderness the Landing is Developed Because Better Landings Adopted Trade-Commercial Pursuits Take Root at the Head of the Thames.

After all these village sites had been more or less developed, the growth of Chelsea began. As has been said, the original landing place, for both the Indians and the English, was just below the falls, at the head of Yantic cove, near the site of Elderkin's mill. As the trade increased, and pushed its way down the river, the term Landing Place was transferred to the point where the river unites, and the upper station was known as the old Landing Place.

What we know as the city of Norwich was for many years a wilderness called Weogawa's Hill, Rocky Point, or Port. The land was owned by a sheep ranch or common pasturage, extending from No-man's Acre to the mouth of the Shetucket, and enclosed with a fence. A trade in furs was carried on here, and the Indians pushed their way down the river, the term Landing Place was transferred to the point where the river unites, and the upper station was known as the old Landing Place.

Early in 1684 a spot was chosen for a public landing place and a highway to connect with the landing place. The highway ran from the mouth of the Shetucket, connecting with a cart path. Here and there a cart path or a sheep track led around the hills, but for the most part there was little to be seen except a few scattered houses, and the spring floods, and even in common rains, East Chelsea, including Franklin square, was overflowed, as the lower, or Water street.

It is difficult to form an accurate picture after the lapse of more than a hundred years, and it is impossible to number the houses existing at any one time. It has been attempted, however, to show in the following list of places of business in Old Norwich the growth of the town, which existed towards the close of the eighteenth century.

Col. Christopher Lettingwell—General store on the triangle of land opposite General Barnard's. He was succeeded by his sons, William and Christopher, who carried on the postoffice here from 1780 to 1800. The store was situated close to the walk on the upper road, so that the present sidewalk passes over its site. (No. 19 on map of 1784.)

Hyde & Hosmer—Sawmill, gristmill, and oilmill at Bean Hill, 1738.

Thomas Harland—Watchmaker, situated north of General Harland's house. (No. 31). Business commenced 1773. In a little shop next to Col. Lettingwell's. (No. 20).

In this little shop "near the store of Christopher Lettingwell" was probably located at different times the following:

James Lincoln—Wool-cards, 1785.

Alexander McDonald—Novelty, 1785.

Daniel Williams—Taylor. In Lettingwell Row, just north of the Lettingwell's.

Between 1740 and 1750 two highways were opened to the Landing, one on each side of the central hill. The eastern road coincided with the present Crescent street, but continued across Broad street, and came into Broadway at the present Yantic street, where it ran through Union street and lower Broadway, ending at the house of Nathaniel Backus, where the Central building now stands.

The western road, Miss Calkins thinks, coincided with the greater part of Washington street, and ended at the old landing at the Falls. It is more probable that it followed the course of Mill lane (now Lafayette street), and the present Yantic street to the old landing at the Falls, and then, crossing the western edge of the stone, through the old Blackstone and

Sturtevant properties, came into the present Washington street not far from the residence of Dr. Casady.

In 1750 Lower street, now Water street, was laid out at the water-side, connecting the two roads just described. By this time this section of the town began to show some respectable buildings, instead of nothing but ship yards, warehouses, and the cottages of fishermen and sailors. By 1757 there were eighty-seven resident families, and the population was twenty-five non-residents. In the society of New Chelsea.

Here was the port, the gate of commerce for Old Norwich. Here at the wharves, coming and going, might be seen the coasting sloops, the Danes, and the brick Two Brothers, Capt. Arua Waterman, the Nancy, Capt. Arua Rogers, the Charming Sally, Capt. Matthew Perkins, or the Betsey, Capt. William Billings.

Here also were located a number of merchants, some of them importing their own goods direct from London. Felt hats, which the colonists were forbidden to manufacture, nails, paper, loaf sugar, nutmeg, spices, were all imported from Europe. The goods were curiously assorted, one merchant advertising sheep-wool, codfish, West India rum, and an assortment of European dry goods.

But the best stores were at the original settlement and the ladies of Chelsea were accustomed to go thither to do their shopping.

OLD NORWICH, 1720-1784.

These Were Years of Most Rapid Development—A List of the Residents and their Locations.

During the years 1720-1784 the village site which we have called Old Norwich was its most rapid development of business. It extended from Reynolds house, which was probably at this time a tavern, by Harland's corner, to the site of the present village of Bozrahville.

Peck's corner, and thence through East Town street to the green, and the meeting house, which was situated on the town street, and the town green was the center of the town.

During this period it has been shown that the landing place for vessels had been changed from the Falls to the village site of Chelsea, and the goods

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